

THE IBIS.

THIRD SERIES.

No. XII. OCTOBER 1873.

XXXIX. *Notes on the Ornithology of Sardinia,*

By A. B. BROOKE, F.Z.S.

[Concluded from page 248.]

140. COLUMBA PALUMBUS.

Very common. Great numbers collect during autumn in the oak forests to feed on the acorns.

141. COLUMBA LIVIA.

Common all the year, breeding round the coast, and also in many localities on inland rocks.

142. COLUMBA CENAS.

Not uncommon.

143. TURTUR AURITUS.

Arrives in great numbers during the month of April.

144. PERDIX PETROSA.

Is the only Partridge in the south of the island, where it is still common in many parts, and is found both on the low mountains and plains. The cry of the cock bird during the months of April and May is very remarkable, loud and melancholy, and can be heard always in the early mornings and late evenings. I have heard several rumours of a different Par-

tridge existing in the north of the island, and I was assured by a good sportsman that he had shot *P. cinerea* there; but I never saw a specimen.

+145. *COTURNIX COMMUNIS*.

A few remain in the island all the year. Large numbers arrive in spring.

+146. *CREX PRATENSIS*.

I never saw or heard any, although they are stated by both Cara and Salvadori to pass annually in spring, the former affirming that some remain all the year.

147. *ORTYGOMETRA PORZANA*.

Passes during the spring.

148. *ORTYGOMETRA PYGMÆA*.

Of rare occurrence.

149. *ORTYGOMETRA MINUTA*.

Passes on its migration.

150. *RALLUS AQUATICUS*.

Common, and resident in the island.

151. *GALLINULA CHLOROPUS*.

Very common at all times.

+152. *FULICA ATRA*.

Extremely abundant during winter, going in large flocks of several hundreds on the different lagoons round Cagliari and Oristano. By far the greater number migrate; but a few remain and breed.

153. *FULICA CRISTATA*.

There are several specimens of this species in the museum; but I was never able to identify or secure any. They are not numerous, and appear more abundantly some winters than others.

154. *PORPHYRIO VETERUM*.

Their appearance seems accidental. Some years they are much more numerous than in others. This species has not yet been discovered breeding in the island.

155. OTIS TETRAX.

Moderately common in some parts of the large plain between Cagliari and Oristano, and also in the smaller one which runs up towards Iglesias. I found them chiefly in the flat stony places, where the cistus was only sparingly scattered and not very high. They were extremely shy and hard to get at, rising very wild, and flying generally from a quarter to half a mile, and running rapidly on alighting. Their flight is peculiar, consisting of short quick flaps of the wings; and the tertiaries, being very long, give the bird a peculiar appearance. The weight of a female was 1 lb. 13 oz.

156. ŒDICNEMUS CREPITANS.

Moderately common and resident.

+157. VANELLUS CRISTATUS.

Very common in winter. None remain during summer.

+158. SQUATAROLA HELVETICA.

A winter visitor, not very numerous.

+159. CHARADRIUS PLUVIALIS.

A spring visitor but not plentiful.

-160. EUDROMIAS MORINELLUS.

According to Cara is a regular bird of passage, spending the winter in the island.

+161. ÆGIALITES HIATICULA.

Common, and some are stated by Cara to breed in the island.

+162. ÆGIALITES MINOR.

I shot at the hot spring of Acqua Cotta on the 30th of May the only specimen I saw. Its stomach was full of the elytra of small aquatic beetles and insects.

They pass in considerable numbers along the coast of the Riviera during the early part of April.

163. ÆGIALITES CANTIANUS.

Very common all the year round along the sea-coast and low sandy shores of the lagoons, where they keep in small flocks of seven or eight. When on the ground they are ex-

tremely hard to catch sight of, as, except when feeding, they sit perfectly motionless in a little round ball, closely resembling in colour the surrounding sand.

164. *GLAREOLA PRÄTINCOLA*.

Sometimes met with during the migration, but rare.

165. *STREPSILAS INTERPRES*.

Not common; a few pass in spring.

166. *HÆMATOPUS OSTRÆLEGUS*.

According to Cara to be met with at all seasons, but only in small numbers.

167. *RECURVIROSTRA AVOCETTA*.

Not uncommon in winter.

168. *HIMANTOPUS MELANOPTERUS*.

An occasional winter visitor.

169. *LIMOSA JÆGOCEPHALA*.

Common during the migration.

170. *TOTANUS GLOTTIS*.

Not uncommon in winter.

171. *TOTANUS STAGNATILIS*.

Is stated by Salvadori to occur in Sardinia in spring on its passage northwards.

172. *TOTANUS FUSCUS*.

A few single birds were about the "stagnos" of St. Giusta near Oristano during the beginning of March. They are wild and independent, never seeming to care much for the company of the other Sandpipers, but when disturbed separating at once, and generally flying a long distance before lighting. Their note is very different from that of *T. calidris*.

173. *TOTANUS CALIDRIS*.

Extremely common during winter.

174. *TOTANUS GLAREOLA*.

A flock of fifteen or twenty of these birds used to keep about a small lake near S. Gavino, in the middle of the plain;

and I saw them there repeatedly until the end of April, when they disappeared. I hardly think any remain to breed in the island.

+175. *TOTANUS OCHROPUS.*

Not uncommon in winter.

176. *ACTITIS HYPOLEUCA.*

I met with one specimen during the month of March. They are common in summer.

+177. *MACHETES PUGNAX.*

On the large wild sandy plain dotted over with small stagnant pools, between the stagno of S. Giusta and the sea, I met with numerous flocks of Ruffs, varying in number from three or four up to as many as twenty, during the first week in March. They were very restless, flying backwards and forwards from one pool to another, feeding hurriedly in a close compact body. Their flight is extremely rapid, turning and twisting, showing alternately the light and dark sides in the same manner as Dunlins &c. None of the specimens I shot showed any sign of a ruff; they were all males.

+178. *TRINGA CANUTUS.*

Occurs during the winter.

+179. *TRINGA MARITIMA.*

Has been killed several times near Capo St. Elia (*Cara*). This Sandpiper is not very uncommon round the Gulf of Genoa; and therefore I can see no reason for doubting the accuracy of Signor Cara's observations on this species (Salvadori, Catalogue, p. 89).

+180. *TRINGA SUBARQUATA.*

Common in winter.

+181. *TRINGA CINCLUS.*

Very common in winter round the sandy shores of the lagoons.

182. *TRINGA MINUTA.*

Not uncommon during winter.. I saw several near Oristano in company with Dunlins.

183. *TRINGA TEMMINCKII*.

Salvadori mentions a specimen in the museum at Turin, received from Sardinia. It is of rare occurrence.

+184. *CALIDRIS ARENARIA*.

Not uncommon.

185. *GALLINAGO GALLINULA*.

Common during winter.

+186. *GALLINAGO MEDIA*.

Extremely abundant in the marshes round Oristano and Cagliari, and in all suitable localities.

187. *GALLINAGO MAJOR*.

Passes in spring.

+188. *SCOLOPAX RUSTICULA*.

Used to be much more numerous than of late years, but still is to be found in considerable numbers in certain favourable localities.

+189. *NUMENIUS ARQUATUS*.

Moderately common in winter.

190. *NUMENIUS TENUIROSTRIS*.

Occurs in the island, but is not very common.

+191. *NUMENIUS PHÆOPUS*.

Common in winter.

+192. *IBIS FALCINELLUS*.

Occurs not uncommonly during the winter. There is a good series in the museum at Cagliari.

193. *GRUS CINEREA*.

A few pass during both migrations; and some remain through the winter. They leave in March or early in April.

+194. *ARDEA CINEREA*.

Very common during winter amongst the large shallow lagoons full of fish, which are most suitable and favourite breeding-places.

195. *ARDEA PURPUREA*.

There are specimens in the museum killed during the mi-

gration. This species is not very common, being merely a bird of passage ; none remain to breed.

196. *EGRETTA ALBA*.

Very common in winter.

197. *EGRETTA GARZETTA*.

Common all the year, frequenting the large lagoons. Their numbers are increased during winter.

198. *BUPHUS BUBULCUS*.

Of rare and doubtful occurrence.

199. *BUPHUS RALLOIDES*.

Passes in spring.

200. *ARDEOLA MINUTA*.

Like the preceding species passes in spring, but is not common.

201. *BOTAURUS STELLARIS*.

A winter visitor. I never met with any myself ; but I believe they are not uncommon.

202. *NYCTICORAX GRISEUS*.

Passes in spring. A few remain during winter.

203. *CICONIA ALBA*.

Of rare and accidental occurrence.

204. *CICONIA NIGRA*.

Commoner than the preceding species. Salvadori mentions having seen some in January at the mouth of the river Fangario, near Cagliari.

205. *PLATALEA LEUCORODIA*.

Not uncommon during winter. There are several specimens in the museum.

206. *PHŒNICOPTERUS ROSEUS*.

Large flocks of Flamingos are to be seen all the winter through on the " stagnos " of Scaffa and Quarto, which lie one on each side of Cagliari, moving backwards and forwards from one to another, according as they are disturbed. They also visit in considerable numbers some of the larger lagoons round

Oristano. I was greatly surprised to find, as late as the 7th of June, 1871, a flock of from five to six hundred of these birds, still remaining about the stagno of Quarto, near Cagliari; and during the several days I watched them, they showed no signs of restlessness, nor any desire to change their quarters, but seemed in every way to have settled for the summer. I was informed by Signor Cara (whom I always found most courteous and obliging in giving me any information he possessed) that it was extremely unusual for *such a large number* to remain during the summer, but that a *few* invariably did so. They certainly do not breed there now, as a sharp look-out is kept for their nests, and they could not escape observation. Amongst the flock I noticed nearly as many adult birds as young; otherwise I should have imagined it was only the young birds of the previous year that remained during summer. Early in the day the flock was scattered all about the stagno in small parties of forty or fifty, feeding round the shores; but towards three or four o'clock in the afternoon they all collected in one long line, extending quite a quarter of a mile, near the centre of the stagno, where they slept with their heads under their wings. They were extremely wild and shy, rising a long way off, with loud harsh cries.

207. PHENICOPTERUS ERITHACUS.

I noticed a great difference in size in many individuals of the flock above mentioned; perhaps some might have been of this species, which is included in Salvadori's list.

+ 208. CYGNUS MUSICUS.

There are no specimens in the museum at Cagliari; but they are, I believe, not uncommon during winter.

209. CYGNUS OLOR.

Varies in numbers according to the severity of the winter. Is the commonest wild Swan that visits the island.

210. ANSER FERUS.

A common winter visitor.

+ 211. ANSER SEGETUM.

Common in winter. During the autumn migration large

flocks of either this or the preceding species pass over Genoa, generally during the night, flying very high, with much loud cackling.

212. *VULPANSER TADORNA*.

Not uncommon in winter. Cara states they breed in the island.

+ 213. *RHYNCHASPIS CLYPEATA*.

Very common in winter.

214. *QUERQUEDULA CIRCIA*.

I saw several pairs on the stagnos at Oristano in March, but I do not know whether any remain to breed.

+ 215. *QUERQUEDULA CRECCA*.

Extremely numerous during winter, going in flocks of forty or fifty. Considerable numbers remain and breed.

216. *ANAS MARMORATA*.

A rare visitant; but Salvadori mentions two well-authenticated instances of its occurrence.

+ 217. *ANAS STREPERA*.

Common in winter.

+ 218. *ANAS BOSCHAS*.

Very numerous, being found during winter in large quantities on all the stagnos. Numbers remain and breed.

+ 219. *DAFILA ACUTA*.

I saw a few at Oristano; but they are by no means numerous.

+ 220. *MARECA PENELOPE*.

Extremely common in winter; but the greater number left long before any of the other Anatidæ. Several times during the first week in March, when camped out on the top of the mountains, on fine clear nights I heard the wild whistle of several flocks of Widgeon as they flew over me very high in a northerly direction.

221. *ERISMATURA LEUCOCEPHALA*.

I frequently saw this bird near Oristano in company with large flocks of Tufted Ducks &c., but never succeeded in se-

curing a specimen. They were not numerous, and seemed to go singly or in pairs; and I never saw more than two together, more frequently single birds. I watched a fine old male one day, for a long time, feeding by himself in the middle of a small lake, but always safely out of shot; he was diving strongly and vigorously, dashing himself under the water, where he remained a considerable time. Their peculiar attitude in the water, along with their short, broad, pale-blue bill, gives them a most quaint appearance.

+ 222. *FULIGULA RUFINA*.

This bird, I think, arrives with the other other Ducks and spends the winter in the island: as early in March they were moderately common at Oristano. The males have a peculiarly handsome appearance on the water, with their bright-red bills and black breast-plates shining and glistening in the sun as if they were polished. "Some breed on the little island of the stagno of 'Scaffa' amongst the reeds and canes" (Salvadori).

223. *FULIGULA FERINA*.

Abundant in winter.

224. *FULIGULA NYROCA*.

Amongst the crowds of Ducks on the different stagnos I never could distinguish this species, and I think it is one of the rarest. It is included in both Cara's and Salvadori's lists.

- 225. *FULIGULA MARILA*.

Of accidental occurrence.

226. *FULIGULA CRISTATA*.

This, I think, is the most numerous of the Anatidæ in Sardinia: they are to be seen sitting by hundreds on all the stagnos, generally mixed up with Mallards, Pochards, Common Teal, Garganeys, Pintails, Gadwalls, Coots, &c., with occasionally a single *Erismatura leucocephala* bobbing up and down with his white shining head in the middle.

227. *GLAUCION CLANGULA*.

This Duck is not very common. I saw a few fine adult males near Oristano.

228. *ÆDEmia FUSCA.*

Very rare. There is a single specimen in the museum at Cagliari.

+ 229. *MERGUS ALBELLUS.*

Of not uncommon occurrence in winter.

230. *MERGUS CASTOR.*

The rarest of the genus. There is one specimen in the museum, a female or young male.

+ 231. *MERGUS SERRATOR.*

Common in winter.

232. *PELECANUS ONOCROTALUS.*

Of very rare and accidental occurrence.

+ 233. *PHALACROCORAX CARBO.*

Extremely common. I one morning early in March counted forty-three in one flock flying like wild Geese from the sea to feed during the day on the stagno of "Scaffa." Many of them had the white spot on the hip.

234. *PHALACROCORAX DESMARESTII.*

There are several named specimens of this very doubtful species in the museum. They are all in immature plumage, with one exception, and differ from the young of the following species in having the breast and belly of a more decided white, with a definite median stripe of still purer colour, about an inch in breadth, running down the front of the throat.

235. *PHALACROCORAX GRACULUS.*

If the former species is indeed distinct, the occurrence of the Shag in this island is, I think, doubtful.

236. *PHALACROCORAX PYGMÆUS.*

Rare. There is one specimen preserved in the museum.

+ 237. *STERNA CASPIA.*

I did not meet with this Tern during any of my visits; but it is stated by Cara to be not uncommon, and Temminck mentions its having been found breeding in the north of the island (Man. Orn. iv. p. 454).

+ 238. STERNA ANGLICA.

Salvadori mentions having received two specimens from Sardinia, that were killed there in May 1868. Two others, killed at the same time, were presented to the museum at Cagliari.

239. STERNA CANTIACA.

Very common, and breeds in the island.

240. STERNA FLUVIATILIS.

Common in summer. I am not sure that any remain during winter.

241. STERNA MINUTA.

A small flock passed over my head one day early in May near St. Antioco, the only time I ever saw them. "They breed in the island" (Salvadori).

+ 242. HYDROCHELIDON LEUCOPTERA.

Passes in spring, but is not common.

243. HYDROCHELIDON FISSIPES.

Not uncommon during summer.

+ 244. LARUS MINUTUS.

Found at all seasons, but not numerous.

245. LARUS MELANOCEPHALUS.

From the Straits of Bonifacio and northwards this Gull was extremely common, following in the wake of the steamer, and several pairs were always in sight. By the 15th of March a great number had already assumed their black head, and the tips of their primaries were pure white; after that date along the coast of Genoa and Leghorn, where they are extremely numerous, few are to be seen in their winter dress.

On one occasion I saw a pair commit an atrocious piece of cruelty on an unfortunate small bird (a Wagtail, I think, by its flight), which was vainly trying to overtake the steamer, evidently nearly exhausted, having only sufficient strength left to clear the waves. It was at once seen by a pair of these Gulls that were hovering hungrily round the stern, and they immediately gave chase. After one or two unsuccessful swoops pluckily and skilfully evaded by the Wagtail,

one of the Gulls knocked it into the sea, lighting beside it, got up, and flew away with it in his bill; but he did not go far before he dropped it, and the poor exhausted little bird made a dying attempt to reach the steamer, his only refuge; but it was of no use, as he was almost immediately caught again and killed. I dare say this is by no means an uncommon fate of many of our smaller summer migrants.

246. *LARUS RIDIBUNDUS.*

Very common all the year.

247. *LARUS GELASTES.*

There are three very fine specimens in the museum. I never saw any. Cara states it is not uncommon, and resident.

+ 248. *LARUS CANUS.*

Not uncommon along the east coast.

249. *LARUS AUDOUINI.*

Cara mentions a specimen killed near the island of Maddalena in the north of Sardinia in 1858. I think it is extremely rare; and I never succeeded in securing a specimen. It is *said* to be not uncommon about the Straits of Bonifacio.

There is a very fine adult specimen in the Museo Civico at Genoa, which was taken near Savona. The measurements of this specimen are as follows:—Wing 14·5 inches, tarsus 2·2, beak from gape 2·4, extreme depth of beak when shut ·5.

250. *LARUS LEUCOPHÆUS.*

Extremely common about the lagoons of Cagliari and Oristano, going generally in pairs. I one day saw a very exciting chase between this Gull and a Common Bald Coot, which he had after a good deal of trouble singled out of a large flock. The chase lasted for fully five minutes, the Gull being much the fastest of the two, and the Coot only escaping by the most marvellously rapid doubling and turning, sometimes (when he got a chance) dashing himself into the middle of a large flock, which always deserted him in a most cowardly manner, scattering in all directions. At last, getting tired, he was overtaken by the Gull when at a considerable height in the air, and knocked senseless into the water with a splash;

the Gull then seemed perfectly satisfied and content, and flew away, taking no further notice of him. The Bald Coot gradually recovered; and after swimming about for a few moments, his senses being evidently in a confused condition, he got up and flew away as if nothing had happened. It is curious that a few moments before I had wounded a Coot—which fell dead about a quarter of a mile from me, and, before I could reach the spot, was nearly devoured by a pair of these Gulls.

251. *LARUS FUSCUS.*

Not uncommon in autumn (*Cara*).

+ 252. *LARUS MARINUS.*

Not common.

+ 253. *RISSA TRIDACTYLA.*

The occurrence of this Gull is doubtful.

+ 254. *THALASSIDROMA PELAGICA.*

Common round the coast.

+ 255. *OCEANITES OCEANICA.*

There is an undoubted specimen of this rare European visitant in the museum at Cagliari, first identified by Dr. Salvadori. It is stated to have been killed near the town.

+ 256. *PUFFINUS CINEREUS.*

Very common all round the coast. I have noticed them especially off the S.W. corner of the island.

+ 257. *PUFFINUS ANGLORUM.*

Common round the coast at all seasons.

+ 258. *ALCA TORDA.*

Of rare occurrence.

+ 259. *FRATERCULA ARCTICA.*

Rare and accidental.

+ 260. *FRATERCULA GLACIALIS.*

There is a specimen under this name in the museum; but I think it is nothing but an ordinary variety of the preceding species.

+ 261. COLYMBUS SEPTENTRIONALIS.

Not uncommon during winter.

+ 262. COLYMBUS GLACIALIS.

Very rare. There is a specimen of an immature bird in the museum.

263. PODICEPS CRISTATUS.

Visits the large lagoons in great quantities during winter, where they are hunted and shot down systematically. None are allowed (at any rate near Cagliari) to remain to breed.

264. PODICEPS LONGIROSTRIS.

There is an extraordinary-looking specimen of a Grebe in the museum under this name; but as I was unable to handle it, I could not examine it satisfactorily.

265. PODICEPS NIGRICOLLIS.

Extremely numerous during winter, remaining until the end of March, when they nearly all leave. I am not sure whether any remain to breed.

266. PODICEPS MINOR.

Extremely common, but not so numerous as the preceding species. They are resident in the island.

XL.—On *Rallus modestus* of *New Zealand*.

By Capt. F. W. HUTTON.

IN his remarks on *Rallus dieffenbachii* ('Birds of New Zealand,' p. 180) Dr. Buller says, "after carefully comparing therewith [*i.e.* with the type of *R. dieffenbachii*] the type specimen of Hutton's *Rallus modestus* (forwarded to me by Dr. Hector), and submitting the matter to the judgment of other competent ornithologists, I have no hesitation in considering it the same species in an immature state of plumage." It is to be regretted that Dr. Buller has not given the names of the "other competent ornithologists;" for naturalists do not generally give anonymous opinions on scientific subjects; but whoever they may be, I venture to think that they have in this case made a very serious error, and I trust that I may be allowed to state my reasons for thinking so.